

Kaingang language

The **Kaingang language** (also spelled **Kaingáng**) is a Gê language spoken by the Kaingang people of southern Brazil.^[3] The Kaingang nation has about 30,000 people, and about from 60% to 65% speak the language. Most also speak Portuguese.

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Overview

The Kaingang language is classified as a member of the *Ge* family, the largest language family in the Macro-Ge stock. The Kaingang territory occupies the modern states of São Paulo, Paraná, Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul (and, until the beginning of the 20th century, Misiones, Argentina). Today they live in around 30 indigenous lands (similar to Native American reservations), especially at Rio Grande do Sul and Paraná.

In the 1960s, because of a missionary interest (conducted by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL)), the language was studied by Ursula Wiesemann.^[4]

Names

The Kaingang and Xokleng were previously considered a single ethnicity, which went by a number of names, including *Amhó*, *Dorin*, *Gualachi*, *Chiqui*, *Ingain*, *Botocudo*, *Ivitorocái* (= *Amho*), *Kamé*, *Kayurukré*, *Tain* (= *Ingain*), *Taven*. Some of these may have been tribal names; others were exonyms. Those

Kaingang	
<i>kanhgág</i>	
Native to	Brazil
Region	São Paulo, Santa Catarina, Paraná, Rio Grande do Sul
Ethnicity	Kaingang people
Native speakers	(18,000 cited 1989) ^[1]
Language family	Macro-Gê - Gê - Southern Kaingang
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	Either: kgp – Kaingang zkp – São Paulo Kaingáng
Linguist List	qr7 (http://multitree.org/codes/qr7) Wayaná (Guayaná)
Glottolog	kain1271 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/kain1271) ^[2]

living along the coast at the time of the Conquest were called *Guayaná*, and are considered to be the ancestors of the Kaingang.^[5] It is unknown to what extent the names might have corresponded to dialectal differences.

Dialects

Loukotka (1968)

Loukotka (1968) lists the following dialects of Kaingán and related language varieties.^[6]

- Kaingán / Caingang / Camé / Taven / Kaingygn / Coroado / Kadyrukré
 - Central - spoken between the Ivaí River and Tiquié River, Paraná State
 - Southern or Iñacoré - spoken in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, now in the villages surrounding the cities of Nonohag and Cáceres.
 - Northern - once spoken on the Tiete River
 - Eastern / Nhakfáteitei / Yakwändatéye / Guayana de Paranapamena - formerly spoken in the state of São Paulo on the Paranapanema River
- Binaré - once spoken on the left shore of the Uruguay River in the state of Rio Grande do Sul
- Xiqui - extinct language from Mato Grosso State, once spoken on the São Francisco River and Piquirí River
- Aweicoma / Bugres / Owaikománg / Xocren - spoken in Santa Catarina State in the hinterland of the cities of Itajaí, Palmas, and Blumenau

Mason (1950)

Mason (1950) lists the following classification for the Caingang group of languages:^[7]

- Caingang
 - São Paulo (Coroado); Nyacfateitei
 - Paraná
 - Rio Grande do Sul
- Shocleng
- Taven
 - Tain
 - Ingain (Wayana, Guayaná)
 - Patte (Basa)
 - Chowa
 - Chowaca
 - Ivitorocai
 - Gualacho (Coronado)
 - Gualachí
 - Chiki
 - Cabelludo
- Dorin

- The oral stops have prenasalized allophones [ᵐp, ⁿt, ⁿk] when following a nasal vowel. In unstressed syllables, /k/ is furthermore voiced to become [ŋg].
- The glottal stop /ʔ/ and the non-stop consonants are realized as nasalized [ṽ, ṽ̃, ṽ̄, ṽ̅, ṽ̆, ṽ̇] preceding nasal vowels.
- The phonemes /b, d, ɟ, g/ are only realized as voiced oral stops between two oral vowels. They are realized as voiced prenasalized stops [ᵐb, ⁿd, ⁿɟ, ⁿg] when between a nasal and an oral vowel, as well as word-initially before oral vowels. Between an oral and a nasal vowel they are conversely realized as prestopped [ᵇm, ᵈn, ɟn, ɡŋ]. Between two nasal vowels, or word-initially before nasal vowels, they are realized as full nasal stops: [m, n, ɲ, ŋ]. The first two types of realization also apply when occurring in the syllable coda and followed by a non-nasal segment; these voiced/prenasalized will however be additionally unreleased: [ᵇᵐ̚, ᵈᵑ̚, ɟᵑ̚, ɡᵑ̚]. However, by convention these stop-phonemes are always written as <m, n, nh, g> in the orthography.
- When preceded by an oral vowel, the sequences /nt, nt, ŋk/ can be realized as geminate stops: [tː, cː, kː].
- /ŋ/ is optionally labialized: [gʷ, ŋʷ], etc.
- The non-glottal fricatives can word-initially be optionally realized as affricates [pḑ, ḑ̃] (including their nasal allophones: [pḑ̃, ḑ̃̃]).
- /w/ can optionally be realized as a voiced bilabial fricative [β], and /j/ as a voiced palatal stop [ɟ]. When nasalized, /j/ varies between [ṽ̃] and [ɲ].
- Word-initially, /ɪ/ is preceded by an epenthetic [ə]; it is [r] in tonic syllables and [l] in atonic syllables, and when nasalized, it varies between [ṽ̃] and [ṽ̄]. As a syllable coda it is a flap when oral and approximant when nasal, and may optionally be palatalized: [rˣ], [ṽ̃ˣ].
- Word-initially in a stressed syllable, /t/ may vary in realization between dental [t̪] and alveolar [t]. Following palatal consonants or preceding a close vowel, it can also be realized as a palatal

stop, [c].

Vowels

Vowel phonemes of Kaingang^[9]

		Front	Back	
		unrounded	unrounded	rounded
<u>Close</u>	oral	<u>i</u>		<u>u</u>
	<u>nasal</u>	<u>ĩ</u>		<u>ũ</u>
<u>Close-mid</u>	oral	<u>e</u>	<u>ɤ</u>	<u>o</u>
<u>Open-mid</u>		<u>ɛ</u>	<u>ʌ</u>	<u>ɔ</u>
		<u>nasal</u>	<u>ẽ</u>	<u>ã</u>
<u>Open</u>	oral		<u>ɑ</u>	

- Atonic /i/ and /e/ as well as /u/ and /o/ are merged; the former pair to [ɪ], the latter pair to [ʊ].^[10]
- The backness of the unrounded back vowels /ɣ, ʌ, ɑ/ varies between back [ɣ, ʌ, ɑ] and central [ə, ɜ, ɐ].^[10]
- All of the oral vowels /i, u, e, ɣ, o, ɛ, ʌ, ɔ, ɑ/ can be realized as voiceless [i̥, u̥, e̥, ɣ̥ ~ ɤ̥, o̥, ɛ̥, ʌ̥ ~ ɜ̥, ɔ̥, ɑ̥ ~ ɐ̥].^[11]
- Nasal vowels have the same quality as oral vowels. However, [Jolkesky \(2009\)](#) doesn't list a central variant of /ã/ on his phone chart.^[10]

Orthography

Wiesemann proposed an alphabet for the language, which is still in use despite some problems. It is based on the [Latin script](#), and consists of fourteen consonants and fourteen vowels, matching the fourteen consonants and fourteen vowels of the Kaingang language.

Vowels		Consonants	
Letter	Sound	Letter	Sound
a	ɑ	f	ɸ
á	ʌ	g	ŋ~g
ã	õ	h	h
e	e	j	j
é	ɛ	k	k
ẽ	ẽ	m	m~b
i	i	n	n~d
ĩ	ĩ	nh	ɲ~j
o	o	p	p
ó	ɔ	r	ɾ
u	u	s	ç
ũ	ũ	t	t
y	ɣ	v	w
ỹ	ã	'	ʔ

There are dictionaries and grammars available for Kaingang. A school was set up in 1969 to teach the Kaingang people to read and write their language. However, the school produced many Kaingang speakers who went back to their reservations to teach others and spread the writing innovations they learned. Only one of the dialects is used as the standard written form, though having the writing system provided a source of pride in the language for the Kaingang people. A Kaingang bible has been published, as well as a dictionary and other publications.

Examples of Kaingang writing can be found on [Omniglot \(http://www.omniglot.com/writing/kaingang.php\)](http://www.omniglot.com/writing/kaingang.php).

Grammar

Postpositions

Kaingang makes use of postpositions.

- **goj:** water
- **goj ki:** in the water

Postpositions are also used to mark subject.

- **Mĩg vỹ venhvó tĩ.** The jaguar runs.
- **Kofá tóg pỹn tãnh.** The old man killed the snake.

Verbs

Kaingang verbs do not inflect.

- **rãgró**: to plant
- **Ti tóg rãgró krãn huri**. He planted beans.
- **Ëg tóg rãgró krãn huri**. We planted beans.

Vocabulary

Loukotka (1968) lists the following basic vocabulary items for Kaingán language varieties.^[6]

gloss	Central Kaingán	Southern Kaingán	Northern Kaingán	Eastern Kaingán	Aweicoma	Guayana	Ingain	Amhó
three	taktón	tagtong	tengtong		umarikélko		tuktain	tektoi
head	krin	krim	i-krin	krim	a-kréng	aparé	aunt-krein	kré
eye	kané	karnä	i-kané	kanem	a-kuná-ma	apin-tá	am-pán	gundón
ear	ningréin	ñinkren	i-ñengré	ningrém	a-yomamá-ma	aminera	am-engrá	nanrá
tongue	noné	uné	i-ñoná	nené	a-numá-ma		a-mundá	nomdá
water	goyo	góyo	góyo	goyo	ngoyo-ma	pranl	kran	karat
fire	pin	pén	piñ	pim	pé-ma	npai	péin	pén
sun	arán	eré	irén	aram	lá	roiñá	ará	aró
maize	ñara	ñéere	géren	ñere	nghára	ñeré	ndui	ndá
jaguar	min	ming	mi	mim	me gló-ma	chuchí	kuchi	chuchi
snake	pan	pan	apóne	pam	poné-ma	kundú	kundú	kundú

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External links

- Catálogo de Línguas Sul-Americanas: Kaingáng (<http://www.etnolinguistica.org/lingua:kaingang>)
- Portal Kaingang (<http://www.portalkaingang.org>)
- Kaingang phonology and Macro-Ge languages (<http://libdigi.unicamp.br/document/?code=vtls000127555>)
- Comparison of English and Kaingang phrases (<http://paginas.terra.com.br/educacao/GICLI/Kaingang.pdf>)
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